(8) MTNL is implementing a Revenue Assurance program to maximize the revenue billing and revenue realization. It has also deployed a reputed firm to conduct Revenue Assurance Audit of its landline interconnect billing process. Convergent billing system is also being introduced by MTNL for improving recovery of dues.

Piracy in cyber world

2892. SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the piracy is on the rise in cyber world;

(b) the steps taken by Government to check this menace;

(c) whether anybody has been arrested in such a case; and

(d) the full details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) As per the BSA-IDC Piracy Study conducted in 2008, the rate of personal computer (PC) software piracy dropped in 2008 in about half (57) of the 110 countries studied, remained the same in about a third (36) and rose in just 16. However, the worldwide PC software piracy rate rose for the second year in a row, from 38 percent to 41 percent, largely because PC shipments grew fastest in countries such as China and India.

(b) The steps taken by the Government to control software piracy include the followings:—

(i) In India the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of software is covered under Copyright Law, violation of which attracts both fine and imprisonment on a mandatory basis. A Police Officer of the rank of Sub-Inspector is empowered to seize infringing copies, duplicating and other equipments used for making infringing copies, without a warrant. The Copyright Act also prohibits the sale or to give on hire, or offer for sale or hire, any copy of the computer programme without specific authorization of the Copyright holder.

(ii) Government has also set up a Copyright Enforcement Advisory Council (under MHRD); the nodal Administrative Ministry) which reviews the progress of enforcement of Copyright Act and also advises on measures - both on the policy front as well as on the implementation front for its better enforcement. Special Cells for monitoring the enforcement of copyright have been set at Police Headquarters in the States/UTs.

(iii) Computer Software is exempted from Customs Duty.

(iv) Instructions have been issued to various Government Departments to only use legal copies of software. Ministry of Human Resource Development and Department of Information Technology, Government of India, as well as NASSCOM, sponsor Software Management Seminars to enhance awareness.

(v) Government has been supporting Anti-Piracy Campaign of NASSCOM include (i) Strict implementation of Code of Conductor for member companies of NASSCOM, (ii) Distribution of brochures and stickers explaining about "Software Piracy and the Law", (iii) Anti Piracy Billboards, Hotline for piracy complaints.

(vi) The market competition has also been instrumental in reducing the costs, thus making the products affordable and hence bringing down the piracy. The introduction of software services is another step towards countering piracy.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per statistics available with National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the number of arrests made during the period January 2006 to June, 2007 is 9649. This information was presented during the 3rd meeting of Copyright Enforcement Advisory Council (set up under MHRD) held in October, 2007.

Wages in BSNL

2893. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of casual labours and contract workers that are engaged in BSNL;

(b) the amount of wages paid to them; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to increase their wages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) Sir, 3361 casual labourers are engaged in BSNL.

In so far as contract workers are concerned, as a policy BSNL does not recruit people on contract basis. However, certain jobs are outsourced through contractors. The number of workers employed by the contractors varies from time to time depending upon the nature of the job.

(b) BSNL does not maintain separate account for the wages paid to the casual labourers. However, the amount booked under "Wages" during the year 2008-09 is Rs. 33,49,44,362/-.

Contract workers are paid wages by the contractors as per Government guidelines.

(c) Yes, Sir. There is a proposal to increase wages for casual labour.

The Contractors are instructed to pay the wages as fixed by the Government. The wages are revised whenever the Government revises the same.

Employees of BSNL

2894. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any decrease in the number of employees working in BSNL;

(b) the status of existing employees against the sanctioned strength in BSNL;